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SNOWBOUND AID CONVOYS FACE HARSH WINTER CONDITIONS

Nordic Battalion vehicles escort a humanitarian aid convoy through a winter landscape in the mountains of north-east Bosnia-Herzegovina - Photo: STATON WINTER. The delivery of aid has been hampered by military road blocks and the weather - **report page 4**

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No changes to mandate –SG report

The UN Secretary-General's report on progress towards the implementation of the peace-keeping plan for the Republic of Croatia was released on 1 December. The report says it is unnecessary to recommend that the Security Council reconsider UNPROFOR's mandate at this time. Initiatives are underway which could pave the way for the implementation of the plan - **report page 3**

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

Force Commander General Cot (centre) visits Sector West to discuss progress towards a cease-fire agreement - Photos: JIHAD EL-HASSAN

By RICHARD CALVER

On 1 November, Rusbat soldiers in Sector East took action to prevent a group of Croat civilians from attempting to lay wreaths close to the confrontation line near Vukovar, where they might have been fired on by Serb forces. In Norway, talks began between the Serb authorities in Krajina and Croatian Government delegates under the chairmanship of Ambassadors Vollebaek and Ahrens aimed at reaching a cease-fire. In Belgrade, SRSG Mr Stoltenberg met President Milosevic.

On 2 November, the situation in Vares was extremely tense, with both Croat and Muslim refugees present in the town and with fighting going on between HVO and BiH forces in the surrounding area. Mr Stoltenberg attended the funeral in Denmark of a UNHCR driver killed in Novi Travnik on 25 October.

On 3 November, Vares fell to a BiH offensive and several thousand Croat refugees headed for the BSA lines to the east and south towards Kiseljak. A Nordbat-2 APC struck a mine, injuring three soldiers, and an NGO car also hit a mine, resulting in the death of the driver and injury to a passenger. The talks between Serbs and Croats in Norway broke up without a conclusive result. Tensions remained high in Sector West because of a Croat Special Police presence near Sirinci and Masicki.

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On 4 November, BiH forces entered Vares. Looting of the town began, despite efforts by Nordbat-2 and Muslim police to stop it. A Spabat patrol reported that the remaining spans of the Bijela Bridge had been destroyed. Negotiations continued with the HVO for permission to carry out surveillance and repair work on the bridge.

On 6 November, there was a marked increase in shelling and firing around Vitez between HVO and BiH forces. In Sarajevo, the situation was tense as the BiH Government disbanded the HVO brigade which had until then been fighting alongside the BiH forces, and reorganized it as a BiH brigade.

On 7 November, a German NGO convoy was stopped near Prozor and three of the four trucks confiscated by the HVO. In Vares, the situation was generally calm, though tensions were high in nearby Dastansko where three Nordbat-2 soldiers were detained for several hours by Serbs. In Sector East, a cease-fire brokered by Sector Commander Brigadier Peeters came into effect.

A refugee child near Vares meets members of the Nordic Battalion

On 8 November, at Rajlovac, an UNPROFOR convoy carrying clerics and BH security officers from Sarajevo to Vares was stopped by Serbs who took two of the BH civilians from a UN APC at gunpoint. In Sarajevo, an evacuation of elderly Serb civilians to the Serb lines began under UNPROFOR escort.

On 9 November, Mr Stoltenberg visited Sarajevo and Split for talks on securing the necessary guarantees for resuming humanitarian convoys in central BH. Negotiations continued throughout the day between UNPROFOR and the Serb authorities in Pale for the release of the two abducted civilians. The evacuation of the Serb civilians was put on hold.

On 10 November, HCA Cedric Thornberry visited Sector West where tensions had been rising because of the Croat Special Police presence at Masicki and Sirinci.

On 11 November, the two BiH Government civilians detained by the Bosnian Serbs were released and the evacuation of elderly Serb civilians from Sarajevo was resumed and completed.

On 12 November, Sarajevo was tense following the arrest of three HVO liaison officers by BiH MPs. Mr Thornberry visited Knin for talks with the Serb authorities about the situation in Sector West.

On 13 November, heavy snowfalls and adverse weather conditions began taking their toll on some of the humanitarian convoy routes. The Fojnica-Bakovici area was very tense. Canbat was providing food to approximately 560 patients of the mental hospitals there, ensuring their security in conjunction with a Danish company.

On 14 November, Croatian Special Police Forces withdrew from Sirinci and Masicki in Sector West under escort from Nepbat. Fighting continued around the Fojnica and Bakovici areas. Mr Thornberry visited Knin for talks with the authorities there on reducing tensions in the UNPAs.

On 15 November, the leaders of the parties to the war in BH were invited to attend a meeting in Geneva on 18 November to discuss conditions under which convoy traffic to central BH could resume. Force Engineers concluded that, because of damage to the Bijela Bridge, the bridge could not be repaired in time for use this winter. Serb and Croat delegations meeting in Kordun in Sector North reached agreement for a cease-fire in the Karlovac area.

On 16 November, HVO soldiers manning a checkpoint outside Fojnica refused to allow an UNPROFOR convoy to take coal and a generator to the mental

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MANDATE

PROGRESS TOWARDS IMPLEMENTING 871

By MARC McEVOY

The UN Secretary-General will not recommend that the Security Council reconsider UNPROFOR's mandate in Croatia "at this time", following progress towards the implementation of the UN peace-keeping plan.

Initiatives are under way which, with the co-operation of the parties, could pave the way for the implementation of the plan, the Secretary-General, Mr Boutros Boutros-Ghali, says in his report to the Security Council, released on 1 December.

The Secretary-General was requested to report to the Security Council two months after resolution 871 was adopted on 4 October on progress towards the implementation of the UN peace-keeping plan in Croatia.

The Council had decided, in resolution 871, to reconsider the mandate of UNPROFOR in the light of the report.

"Progress is slow and is quickly halted if one side attacks territory held by the other. Nevertheless, in view of the developments reported by my Special Representative since my report on 20 September 1993, I do not find it necessary to recommend that the Security Council reconsider UNPROFOR's mandate at this time," says the report.

"If, however, the international community's very substantial commitment to peace-making and peace-keeping in Croatia is to be sustained, it is essential that the two sides intensify their efforts for the achievement of a cease-fire agreement, for the institution of practical measures of economic co-operation and for the negotiation of a lasting political settlement."

The report focuses on two areas of concern regarding the mandate: talks within the framework of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia (ICFY), and implementation of the UN peace-keeping plan.

On the peace talks, the report says they have continued with the objective of achieving a comprehensive cease-fire in and around the UNPAs in Croatia and initiating discussions on economic confidence-building steps.

It says UNPROFOR's activities have helped develop a more positive atmosphere for the talks.

In regard to the UNPAs, efforts are under way on many of the issues raised by Croatia's President Tudjman in his November 2 "Peace Initiative", particularly the search for agreement on a cessation of hostilities; resumption of the work of the Joint Commission; and normalization "of overall social economic life in the UNPAs" and co-operation among the parties.

At talks chaired by ICFY from 1 to 3 November, a three-step strategy was accepted: discussion of a cease-fire; consideration of economic reconstruction; and discussion on political questions.

Joint Commission

The report says the key elements of the cease-fire agreement under discussion are the separation of the forces along the confrontation lines, with UNPROFOR interposing itself between the two sides and monitoring heavy weapons on both sides.

The main areas of economic interest to the parties discussed at the talks related to infrastructure and communications, energy and water supply. A priority was water supply and there was agreement to put the entire water system into operation and to restore the oil pipeline and the energy supply system.

The Croatian side indicated that, following the implementation of the cease-fire, Zemunik airport and Maslenica bridge would be opened for use by both sides.

The report says that further talks were held on 23-24 November and 26-28 November. On 28 November, the Croatian side said that, with one modification, they could sign the cease-fire proposal. The Serb side said it would consider signing after some changes, pending the elections on 12 and 19 December.

The parties agreed to establish a military Joint Commission to continue practical work on outstanding areas of dispute on the lines of separation to be used once the cease-fire is implemented.

On the implementation of the UN peace-keeping plan, the report says that following the adoption of resolution 871, UNPROFOR reinforced its two-track approach of providing support for the talks sponsored by ICFY and promoting step-by-step actions in the UNPAs.

UNPROFOR has also sought to assist with matters such as the activities of the Joint Commission established under resolution 762 and the "confidence-building measures" referred to in resolution 871.

The report says there have been moves in all UNPAs towards achieving local cease-fires. These range from a signed, formal cease-fire agreement in Sector East to "gentlemen's agreements" – oral and unsigned, but implemented - in the other three Sectors, in each of which discussions are continuing towards formal agreements.

Local cease-fires have, in each Sector, been supported by the establishment of new observation posts, additional patrols by United Nations Military Observers, and the installation of hot lines with, and between, the two sides. The consequence of this has been a discernible reduction in tension and violations throughout the UNPAs.

Mr Stoltenberg

General Cot

HUMANITARIAN

A UNHCR convoy bound for central Bosnia-Herzegovina before the bad weather arrived - Photo: STATON WINTER

BH RELIES ON UNHCR'S WINTER DRIVE

By MARC McEVOY

The delivery of humanitarian aid has become the focus of the United Nations' effort in Bosnia-Herzegovina, following the onset of a life-threatening early winter.

The International Management Group for Infrastructure in Bosnia-Herzegovina warned in its first report on 26 October of a major catastrophe this winter if the problem of access to fuel, spare parts and other supplies for power stations and coal mines was not overcome.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Sadako Ogata, says more than 2.7 million Bosnians need humanitarian assistance.

The early winter conditions may force large-scale population movements out of Bosnia-Herzegovina (BH) as well as to other areas within the republic, says UNHCR, the peak humanitarian aid agency operating in the former Yugoslavia.

UNHCR's Chief of Mission in BH, Karen AbuZayd, says the harsh conditions brought on by early heavy snowfalls are threatening to kill an inestimable number of civilians.

BH's economic ruin, limited access to food, lack of essential utilities such as health care, electricity, gas, water supply and sanitation facilities, have made the republic's civilian population particularly vulnerable.

Ms AbuZayd says UNHCR's target for delivering food and supplies to BH under its 1993-1994 Winterization Plan is 52,000 tonnes a month. It was hoped to have BH's humanitarian needs this winter delivered by December 1.

"But our best was 32,000 tonnes in October and that was during good weather. A more realistic figure is about 20,000 tonnes a month," Ms AbuZayd told UNPROFOR NEWS.

Suspended

Ms AbuZayd says the UNHCR has plenty of resources and food supplies outside BH, but bad weather, fighting and political manoeuvrings among the parties, which have been blamed for roadblocks at checkpoints, have been restricting humanitarian convoys' access to the region.

The ongoing obstruction of UN aid convoys by local military commanders contravened the agreement allowing the free passage of UN aid convoys in BH signed in Geneva on 18 November by the leader of the Bosnian Serbs, Dr Radovan Karadzic, the leader of the Bosnian Croats, Mate Boban, the Prime Minister of BH, Haris Silajdzic, and Mrs Ogata.

Also, aid deliveries were suspended for three weeks following a machine-gun and mortar attack on a UNHCR convoy and an UNPROFOR Dutch Transport Battalion convoy near Vitez on 25 October. A Danish Refugee Council driver was killed, and another driver and nine UNPROFOR soldiers were wounded.

Under its Winterization Plan, UNHCR is giving priority to several convoy routes, including Metkovic via Mostar to Sarajevo and Belgrade via Zvornik to Tuzla. Jablanica, Prozor and Zenica are also destinations being given priority.

UNCHR's aid deliveries comprise 70 per cent food and 30 per cent winter relief items, including building materials, mattresses, blankets, clothes, water containers and tents.

Because food delivery was a priority before the onset of winter, the BH population severely lacks winter items.

Ms AbuZayd says UNHCR will be committed to helping many refugees who have fled to neighbouring countries because of the war in the former Yugoslavia.

As to whether UNHCR plans further programs in the former Yugoslavia, Ms AbuZayd says there is an overwhelming amount of humanitarian work to be done in the region.

"But if UNPROFOR were to leave it would be difficult for us to operate here without protection," she says.

PEACE-KEEPING

Conflict and humanitarian action

UNPROFOR's Head of Civil Affairs, Cedric Thornberry, spoke at the International Peace Academy Conference at Princeton University, New Jersey, on 22 October. The following excerpts are from the presentation he was asked to make on "Peace-keeping, War, Humanitarian Action and Human Rights—the former Yugoslavia"

I would also like to convey a few broader thoughts, stimulated by the Yugoslav experience, knowing that one should not extrapolate too widely from any one operation; and conscious that proximity and clarity are not always compatible.

First, I know no senior UNPROFOR member who has believed for more than maybe a month after his or her arrival that this is a situation to which Chapter 7 would be appropriate.

My military colleagues have been especially firm about this. Chapter 7, in ex-Yugoslavia, would require huge deployments of men and materiél for a protracted period. Moreover, it would require a political commitment by contributing Governments, whose impartiality would have to be beyond question, to make such deployments, and to accept the probability of a high incidence of casualties.

I do not say that these elements are true for every undertaking - they relate to the specific facts of the Balkans. Personally, I know of no country that satisfies the tests mentioned above; though I have nothing but admiration for the dedication that currently exists among our contingents.

Chapter 6, or 6.9, is, anyhow, ample for our current tasks. It enables us to adopt a suitably muscular posture when required; we return fire on a daily basis, averaged out. The additional possibility of close air support is also important. Though in a sense this is like the nuclear, ultimate, deterrent - if used, the whole situation will change, and our humanitarian work will be permanently affected.

President of Ireland Mary Robinson with Cedric Thornberry, Ireland's senior UN peace-keeper, at the Presidency in Dublin on 18 October - Photo: SUSAN KENNEDY

This leads me to my second point. Yugoslavia has provided an important test for "the new humanitarianism" - the noble ideal that has developed since the Cold War that we all belong to the same global village.

I would dearly like to believe in this, not only as a matter of faith, but also of reality. Some useful lessons can be learnt from the UNPROFOR experience. We have seen very specific limitations to the generous spirit which underlies the impulse to intervene, on humanitarian grounds, when confronted by large-scale horror and human misery, and despite the vital international principle of respect for State sovereignty. (Such respect has, also, in my opinion, a very sound rationale.)

Where there is not a perceptible national self-interest involved, there are few democratic Governments which can pay the potentially high price in blood and resources which may be entailed through dispassionate engagement in the relief of suffering. Of course, that price can also be paid, as we in UNPROFOR have learnt, for operations under Chapter 6 - to the tune of more than 700 casualties in 18 months.

That leads to my third thought, and I must again refer to the role of the media. Much of the Western media - especially the liberal press - have been encouraging a fantasy approach to ex-Yugoslavia.

The brutal fact is, that there *is* no valiant Light Brigade, or John Wayne-led cavalry, galloping heroically to the rescue in the last reel of the movie. In fact, one sometimes wonders whether there may *be* a last reel.

This Balkan saga could run almost indefinitely, and perhaps the international community needs to rethink the time-scale which will be necessitated for major structural change and re-stabilization, together with its role in that perspective - rather than the idea of a rather quick fix.

It is not surprising that reaction has now set in. Simon Jenkins' article in The (London) Times this week, for instance, referring to the contemporary plethora of civil wars, described them as the "current madhouse of foreign policy, Satan's mischief for idle hands" with, he asserted, a tendency in some countries for "the world's soldiers to be put on alert at the flash of a television image".

In a chilling analysis he asserted that the current fluidity derives from the continuing failure of many countries, still with large national military resources and armouries, to define clearly their foreign policy objectives in the post-Cold War world. There are also major institutions looking for a role. In the competition for budgetary priorities, do electorates want more foreign military interventions, or more schools and hospitals? Perhaps we shall continue, for a few years yet, to see the ebb and flow of this iridescent passion for intervention in other people's conflicts; until some new stability is established.

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Let me state three, probably self-evident, truths about peace-keeping: first, the presence of a peace-keeping force is no substitute for

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PEACE-KEEPING

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political negotiation; second, peace-keeping and humanitarian assistance are compatible and are based on the same imperative of impartiality; third, military intervention on one side, under the guise of peace-keeping or humanitarianism, is apt to be calamitous for both.

Yugoslavia has been a tough case. But I believe it helps us to look more clearly for what might be the basic international interest in dealing with internal conflicts.

Perhaps we need to look at three objectives in the context of civil wars - containment of the conflict; humanitarian assistance provided on a practical and realistic basis and targeted on the most vulnerable groups; and steady, consistent impartial good offices and mediation best offered - I would suggest - by the Secretary-General of the UN.

Most of the lessons we have learnt in ex-Yugoslavia are, otherwise, *not* new. You can find them all set out in the basic principles of peace-keeping in the opening chapters of "The Blue Helmets".

They derive from the first 40 years' hard experience, and they stand the test of time: agreement of the parties and their continuing co-operation; a clear and realistic mandate; support of the Security Council, and its *continuing* support; a properly funded budget and necessary resources; and absolute, transparent, crystal clear impartiality. Without impartiality, we are soon seen as an invading foreign force, and we draw predictable reactions.

The lessons of the multinational force in Beirut of 10 years ago, which it was also my painful experience to witness, should not have to be learnt again so soon. Some of the peace-keeping ground rules have not been fully observed in the past two years of international endeavour in ex-Yugoslavia, and we, in UNPROFOR, have paid the price. (For example, the parties have *not* co-operated, on the whole, and have obstructed and attacked us on a day-to-day basis.)

Solutions

These concepts, derived from what now seem the simpler days of peace-keeping in international wars, must also be fully complied with in the kind of civil war situation we have in the Balkans.

We who have the remarkable privilege to manage and participate in peace-keeping operations are not magicians or political miracle workers; and the realistic parameters, and those of political rhetoric, have sometimes diverged during our Yugoslav experience.

Perhaps we come back to this: the international community should be very wary about the nature of its intervention in internal political conflicts, unless it is sure that it is ready to import the full panoply of enforcement action, and to stay for maybe a decade while stability is imposed and then takes root. My fellow-countryman, Robert Lynd, 100 years ago, noted that the idea of a quick, simple, effective military intervention is one of history's most enduring fallacies.

And let me, finally, indulge myself by reiterating the persistent moan of the persistent peace-keeper: peace-keeping and humanitarian action are no substitute for effective and well-timed political good offices and mediation.

Enduring solutions to the kinds of deep structural problems we have encountered in ex-Yugoslavia are found neither through force of arms nor through the wizardry of peace-keepers.

They come, instead, primarily through resolute, well-informed, and impartial political negotiation and mediation. The peace-keeper's role is secondary to that, not the other way around.

I conclude upon this sad note: that where conditions do not exist for effective peace-making negotiations, or where they are otherwise ineffectual, for whatever reason, the insertion of a peace-keeping operation may well exacerbate, rather than improve, humanitarian conditions - a tragic irony, indeed.

MANDATE

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The report says that the deployment on 21 October of Croatian "special police" in the areas of Sirinci and Masicka in Sector West heightened tensions there and caused a suspension of the negotiations which had begun a few days earlier. The "special police" were withdrawn after negotiations at the battalion, Sector and ministerial levels.

According to the Force Commander's directions, Sector Commanders have taken a number of other steps on the military side to enhance co-operation and reduce tensions, including the opening of several new crossing points and the enhancement of UNPROFOR's border-monitoring capability. They have initiated, and maintained, face-to-face meetings between the two sides' military Commanders in, and adjacent to, all Sectors.

In Sector South, says the report, small steps towards co-operation on a localized basis in humanitarian and economic matters have been possible, but elsewhere both sides have refused to meet, or have broken off scheduled meetings.

The report says that, on the positive side, in the village of Podlapaca, which contains the largest remaining concentration of Croats in Sector South, UNPROFOR has stabilized a situation which had begun to deteriorate rapidly after the September 1993 incursion by the Croatian Army into the Medak pocket and the atrocities committed there.

UNPROFOR has also increasingly identified, says the report, those most in need of humanitarian help, and ensured its delivery to them. A joint humanitarian cell has been established, for instance, in Sector North, bringing together all elements of UNPROFOR, together with the Office of the UNHCR and the International Committee of the Red Cross, to identify those most in need, especially of food and medical aid.

UNPROFOR officials meet Croatian authorities in Pakrac, Sector West, to discuss the presence of Croatian 'special police' - Photo: ANDY BURRIDGE

SECTORS

AMPUTEES OVERCOME THE LEGACY OF WAR

Orthopaedic engineer Antero Kinnunen fits a mine victim with an artificial limb at Topusko spa hotel centre - Photo: STATON WINTER

By MARC McEVOY

A pink, bald stump was all that remained of the man's right leg, which moved awkwardly in a circular motion suspended above the ground as if it had a life of its own.

The victim of a mine blast while a soldier with the Serb forces in Krajina, the man had undressed in the rehabilitation centre at the Topusko spa hotel in Sector North to prepare for the fitting of his first artificial limb.

There was no shyness or shame about exposing his misfortune; rather, a brazen display of the legacy of war.

"I stepped on a mine about four months ago that I didn't notice and I was immediately left without a leg," he said recounting an incident that occurred when he was patrolling alone near the confrontation line in the United Nations Protected Area.

"I saved myself by crawling about 30m or 40m to the roadside. An army truck couldn't take me because it was full, but then an UNPROFOR car appeared and returned me to Glina."

The man, who did not want to be named, is one of hundreds of amputees, civilian and military, throughout the mission area who have received prostheses, or artificial limbs, under a joint initiative set up in October between the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNPROFOR.

Produced by the Finnish Red Cross Orthopaedic Service, the limbs have been financed through the Finnish Industrial Development Agency by WHO as part of a general rehabilitation program it began in the former Yugoslavia in late 1992.

Since WHO established its special service for amputee victims of the war, 160 people have been fitted with artificial legs in Zagreb, 50 in Split, 30 in Bihac, and about 200 are expected to be fitted during the current program in Krajina.

UNPROFOR Civil Affairs officer in Sector North, Paolo Raffone, said a meeting he had in Zagreb with WHO's rehabilitation programmes co-ordinator, Dr Christina Dotare, led to the supply of the prostheses for the UNPAs.

"I discussed with her the possibility of setting up a rehabilitation program tackling physical and mental traumas," said Mr Raffone.

"Later she visited us (UNPROFOR) in Topusko and brought with her some of the artificial limbs."

WHO orthopaedic engineer Antero Kinnunen, 41, of Helsinki, who has worked five times in the former Yugoslavia since the start of the war, has been based in Topusko since November 2 fitting four or five amputees a day at the spa hotel centre.

Mr Kinnunen, who has a two-month assignment in the former Yugoslavia, says more than 80 per cent of the amputees he treats are the victims of mine explosions.

He says most amputees remain deeply distressed for some time by their experience and often have family problems that are worsened by the abuse of alcohol or drugs.

"In my previous work, most people I treated were old and in bad shape anyway," said Mr Kinnunen.

"But this is unusual here because most people are young, which means some adapt to their new prosthesis within days and need little physiotherapy."

In the rehabilitation centre, Mr Kinnunen prepares two prostheses for a man who has lost both legs above the knee from a mine blast.

Made from titanium and aluminium, the artificial limbs can take some time to fit because they have to be carefully moulded to avoid discomfort.

Mr Raffone said UNPROFOR was also studying ways of implementing part of the WHO rehabilitation programme that involves psychological therapy for both military and civilian people adversely affected by their war experiences.

"We hope to start setting up psychological care centres, especially in schools," he said.

"These people are not necessarily suffering from trauma but more from societal conditions. Group therapy could help to restore their confidence in the future."

Mr Raffone said there was a lot of latent depression among the civilian population and local doctors had reported alarming increases in suicide attempts and alcohol-related problems.

However, offering local populations services such as rehabilitation programmes gave them some hope, he said.

One of the amputees being fitted by Mr Kinnunen said the prostheses programme meant many war victims could finally return to normal life.

"I couldn't sleep last night knowing I was going to get a new leg today," he said smiling broadly.

"It means I'll be able to walk alone without crutches. I would like especially to thank you (UNPROFOR). I don't know if this is your initiative but I'm really happy I've now got this limb."

SECTORS

Sergeant Deslauriers with his section on duty at OP 921 - Photos: STATON WINTER

BUFFER ZONE IN NO MAN'S LAND

By MARC McEVOY

Some nights the black sky above the confrontation line near Benkovac in Sector South explodes with a blistering exchange of fire power between the warring sides.

UNPROFOR troops from Canadian Battalion based in the area at an observation post called OP 921 must keep their heads low as orange tracer bullets lead a barrage of heavy machine-gun, mortar and artillery fire.

"Despite the cease-fire we still get rounds flying about 15 feet (5m) over our heads some nights," says Sergeant Eric Deslauriers, the leader of Section Command Pioneer, Forward Platoon, B Company.

"Last night we had heavy machine-gun and tracer fire all around us from both sides and we could hear big artillery."

However, hostilities have reduced in the area since OP 921 was set up more than two months ago near the village of Miranje as part of an UNPROFOR initiative to create a buffer zone between the Croats and Serbs.

Situated along a straight road in a flat burnt-out no man's land littered with mines, OP 921 is 250m from the Serbs and 600m from the Croats.

It has a sister observation post, OP 920, on the Croatian side. Only UN vehicles pass between the two posts, which are each manned by eight troops working in 48-hour shifts. Because of the intense alertness required to maintain constant vigilance, the troops work four hours on, eight hours off.

Sergeant Deslauriers says OPs 921 and 920 benefit both the Serbs and Croats because each side is assured its region and surrounding villages are secured within an UNPROFOR-controlled zone, similar to that set up in the Medak pocket in September following a Croatian Army attack on Serb villages.

Sergeant Deslauriers, a 29-year-old mines expert from Montreal, says OP 921 has a 300-degree view and is equipped with an armoured personnel carrier and highly sophisticated night-vision infrared binoculars.

The UNPROFOR Commander of Sector South, Colonel George Oehring, also of Canada, says buffer zones are an important peace-keeping strategy for creating the conditions necessary for an on-going cease-fire.

"If the two sides are glaring at each other, even if they have agreed to a cease-fire, it is too easy for something like an accidental discharge of a weapon to set the whole thing boiling again," says Colonel Oehring.

Colonel Oehring says buffer zones, which have proved successful in other UN peace-keeping operations, are lines the UN controls with the mutual agreement of both parties so they can be moved or eliminated once a more general cease-fire is implemented.

HEROIC SOLDIER RESCUES TOUGH MEDAK SURVIVOR

By ALLUN ROBERTS

There was no sign of life. As the Canadian patrol from 1st Battalion, Royal 22nd Regiment, searched the destroyed villages in the Medak area of Sector South everything was deserted.

Thirty six days after the Croatian Army attack on 9 September that devastated the villages of Citluk, Divo Selo and Pocileg, all known survivors were thought to have been accounted for.

Miraculously, Anka Rajcevic, 56, proved the exception. Shot through the thigh and left for dead in her destroyed house in Citluk, Anka had made her way to a forest where she hid in an abandoned car and nursed her wound with forest leaves.

She survived on berries, wild fruit and rain water before being discovered more than five weeks later by a friend who sought the help of UNPROFOR's Canadian No. 1 Company a few kilometres away.

Lieutenant Claude Lavallee followed Anka's friend to the abandoned car which was situated near the confrontation line in the middle of a minefield within range of sniper fire.

"When I got to the car the woman was much too weak to walk. I had to carry her out, instructing her friend and my interpreter to follow exactly in my footsteps to avoid mines," said Lieutenant Lavallee.

"It was only when we got into our APC that this tough woman showed any sign of emotion. Then she cried. She knew her ordeal was over."

Anka is now recovering in Knin hospital and will soon be reunited with her husband and son, thanks to the heroic effort of Lieutenant Lavallee.

Anka Rajcevic in Knin hospital and (insert) Lieutenant Lavallee

SARAJEVO

UNPROFOR troops unload aid supplies at Sarajevo airport - Photo: STATON WINTER

HUMANITARIAN AID FLIGHTS SURPASS BERLIN AIRLIFT

The humanitarian aid airlift into Sarajevo has run longer than the Allied airlift into Berlin after the Second World War. But the Sarajevo airlift is operating while fighting continues in Bosnia-Herzegovina, with the two sides sometimes exchanging fire across the runway. DAVID BALHAM reports

There is a bullet hole high up in one of the floor-to-ceiling windows in the control tower at Sarajevo airport.

Someone has drawn a circle around it and written with military precision the time and date the tower was hit: "7.29 in the morning on 21st September".

These days there is bullet-proof glass around the lower parts of the windows, but it doesn't pay to be too tall or to stand on a chair to get a better view. Sarajevo airport is literally in the middle of a war.

The width of the runway divides the encircled city from other Muslim-held territories in Bosnia, and every night gunmen pick off people trying to cross the tarmac to freedom.

Every house for 1.5km around the airport has been shelled to a skeleton, and people travelling from the terminal to the city are preyed on by snipers with high-powered rifles.

And yet the airport still functions as the centre of the United Nations effort to bring food and humanitarian supplies to about 350,000 people trapped in Sarajevo.

On October 7, the Sarajevo airlift had been running 462 days - equalling the 1948-49 Berlin airlift.

Since the first aid delivery in July last year, more than 6,500 UNHCR flights have delivered food and supplies to people whom the war has made almost totally dependent on aid.

Colonel Bernard Bragard, of the French Air Force, is the Airport Commander. He describes some of the problems of running an airport under fire: "It's very difficult to continue the airlift when we have shelling and mortars and bullets crossing the runway. We study the situation and if we need to we stop the airlift when the situation is too dangerous."

The dangers are particularly acute for the international pilots who fly aid into Sarajevo airport. Before the war, planes used to descend gently and fly in low over the city.

Now that's too dangerous, so they approach the runway from the other direction, flying high over the mountains that surround Sarajevo.

They don't even begin their descent until they can see the runway. Then they drop about 8,000 feet like shot ducks, at a rate of up to 16 times the norm for commercial flights.

British RAF pilot Flight Lieutenant Dave Cranston has flown his Lockheed C130 Hercules into Sarajevo 75 times. He explains the barn-storming approach to the airport: "We are very serious about the final approach. We believe that there's always a threat from gunfire so the higher we can come, obviously the better we can stay out of range of the guns."

Once they touch down, the planes stay on the ground for only six minutes, the time it takes the French "dechargeurs", or unloaders, to remove up to 10 tonnes of aid from the cargo holds.

Then they take off again, climbing almost as steeply as they dropped to clear the mountains and try to avoid the threat of gunfire. Engine problems can make this sort of flying almost impossible - which is why the French no longer fly planes with only two engines into Sarajevo.

Only one plane has been lost since aid started flying into Bosnia. Early in September last year, an Italian aircraft was shot down 10 nautical miles from the airport, killing everyone on board.

The airlift was stopped for a month, the longest time it has been suspended, forcing Sarajevo to rely on aid delivered by road.

The break showed just how important the airlift has become to Sarajevo since UNPROFOR scored a diplomatic victory in July 1992 by negotiating the reopening of the airport for aid flights.

At the end of that month, the first UN plane flew into Sarajevo, carrying French

Continued page 10

SARAJEVO

Unloaders remove up to 10 tonnes of aid from the cargo hold - Photo: STATON WINTER

From page 9

President Francois Mitterrand. A few days later, the humanitarian airlift began, bringing in desperately needed supplies of food and medicine.

The head of UNHCR in Sarajevo, Tony Land, explains how crucial the airlift has been: "The airlift and the airport were really the beginning of us being able to deliver aid to Sarajevo after the war completely closed it off. Over the period, something like May through until the end of June, there was no access to Sarajevo for relief supplies at all, and when the airlift began there started to be the opportunity for some hope in giving people a regular supply of food in the city."

The UNPROFOR agreement to open the airport included guarantees of security for the people bringing aid to the city.

To ensure this, both the Serbs and the Bosnians have a liaison officer posted at the airport. If the shelling from either side comes too close, the liaison officer picks up the phone and calls his military command - usually resulting in the shelling moving away again.

Keeping the flow of aid running is not the only thing UNPROFOR does at Sarajevo airport. UN civilian police monitor cargo and passengers.

Because the airlift is the only safe way out of the Sarajevo war zone, many people try to smuggle themselves or goods out - and, sometimes, in.

Unauthorized travel has to be stopped in case UN flights are used for military purposes or smuggling. A favourite technique is the use of forged or stolen press cards, which give access to flights out of Sarajevo.

Royal Canadian Mounted Police Constable Tim Wry says good police work is the key to catching people trying to travel on illegitimate papers.

"After you've been here a while you recognize the look of somebody who is legitimate," he says. "A reporter has a definite look. He has a literary look, that of an educated man who has literary interests; whereas, you get people travelling through who do not look like reporters at all, or they're just too nervous, too tense."

Another part of UN civilian police work is stopping up to 350 people who try to cross the runway every night to escape Sarajevo.

A smaller number try to cross into the city, usually to see their families or smuggle in black market goods, a practice that is making fortunes for those brave, or desperate, enough to risk it.

Snipers with infra-red night-sights constantly scan the runway, and people trying to cross it are killed every week.

As another plane takes off after unloading its cargo of aid, a shell explodes not far from the runway.

It is another needless reminder of the risks and commitment involved for all those who contribute to the Sarajevo airlift: flying aid to a country at war.

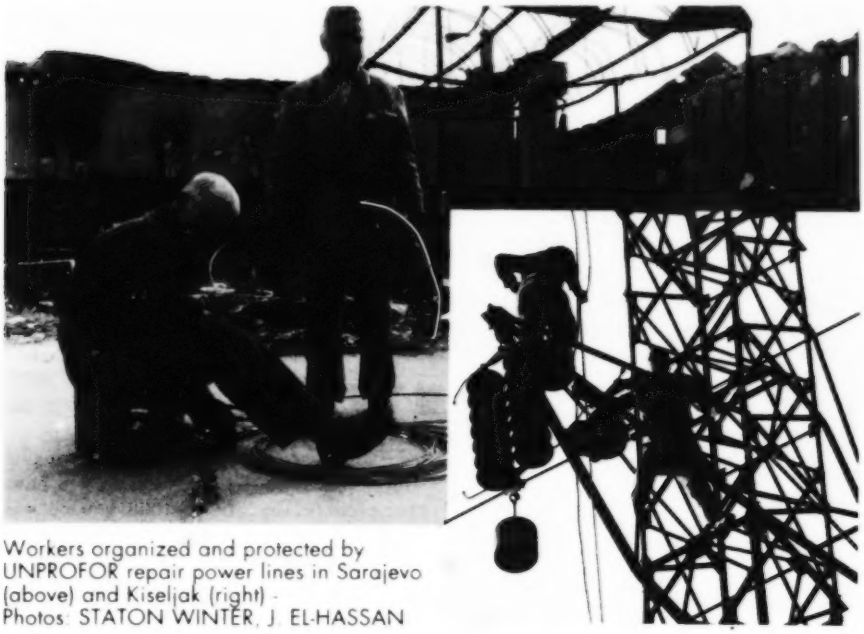
Colonel Bragard

Sarajevo airport's UNPROFOR control tower - Photos: STATON WINTER

SARAJEVO

WAR SPARKS NEED FOR POWER REPAIRS

The lives of ordinary people caught in a war are often disrupted by the loss of power, water, and sewerage systems. When utilities are damaged by fighting or used as weapons of war, civilians find themselves without heat, light and sanitation. UNPROFOR helps the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina by assisting in electricity repair missions. But it's not an easy job. DAVID BALHAM reports



Workers organized and protected by UNPROFOR repair power lines in Sarajevo (above) and Kiseljak (right) - Photos: STATON WINTER, J. EL-HASSAN

The two workers were slung from a power pole 15m off the ground, exposed and precarious, when the sniping started.

The rifle shots came from red and yellow tree-covered hills in the direction of the confrontation line less than a kilometre away, and echoed harshly through the afternoon autumn silence in the valley near Zenica in central Bosnia-Herzegovina (BH).

The men yelled and threw down the tools they were using to repair the broken power line, then scrambled down the pole to safety, laughing nervously after they reached the ground and taking long swigs from a bottle of brandy one of the other workers handed them.

One of the men was a Croat, the other a Bosnian. One was being shot at by his own side. Before the war they had worked together for the same electricity company. Now they were on the same electricity repair team organized and protected by UNPROFOR.

A British Warrior APC crashed through the young trees on the opposite side of the river, forded the water and climbed the steep river bank, slewing sideways on its tracks to stop. Soldiers jumped out and fanned into combat positions, dropping flat in the grass with their guns in front of them and trying to locate the sniper. But finding him in the cover of the trees was impossible, and the mission was cancelled.

One of the workers shook his head. "It's terrible when you're up there and you know that someone is shooting at you," he said. "All people in this area need electricity, and we should provide electricity for people on this side and the other side."

Though it is not a deliberate policy, the repair teams are often mixed; UNPROFOR engineers choose the best people for each job, which frequently means a combination of Croat, Muslim and Serb workers.

Attacks on workers, obstructions at checkpoints and other problems mean that four out of five of UNPROFOR's electricity missions in central Bosnia are cancelled before completion. Of the successful missions, about half have to be repeated because the repaired lines of substations are shot up again.

Almost by definition, most of the repairs are made on the front lines, where the electricity infrastructure has been damaged by fighting or sabotage.

Before every mission, UNPROFOR engineers go through the laborious routine of obtaining clearances and local cease-fire agreements from area Commanders, though these are often ignored by soldiers at checkpoints, forcing missions to be cancelled.

UNPROFOR soldiers escort the workers to the repair sites, and give them as much protection as they can. But there's always a danger from rogue gunmen, and several workers have been injured on repair missions - though none has been killed.

The Engineer Operations and Planning Officer at UNPROFOR's BH Command, Major Andy Wilson, explains the problem: "There is always a risk. What we can't guarantee is that the agreement to a cease-fire at the higher level will always be followed through to every soldier."

Keeping the power flowing is worth the risk and frustration. Though rural areas may be able to survive the sub-zero temperatures of winter on firewood and coal, Sarajevo will almost completely depend on electricity for domestic heating and cooking.

Electricity also drives the pumps that provide the city's water supply, which in turn regulates the sewerage system. Major Wilson says "without electricity, it's going to be a very miserable winter for a lot of people".

The main electricity generating plants still functioning in BH are the hydro-electric station at Jablanica and the coal-fired plant at Kakanj. Jablanica alone is capable of producing enough electricity for all of BH, even during the winter.

Both plants have suffered little damage, and both are in Presidency-controlled areas. But the power lines, transformers and switching stations spread throughout all areas of the country in a complex network are manipulated by all sides as a technological weapon of war.

All the factions sometimes cut power or water supplies which run through their areas to supply rival territories, often claiming the utilities are being used for military purposes. Invariably, it is civilians who suffer.

DEPLOYMENT

Members of the Malaysian Battalion arrive at Zagreb airport - Photo: STATON WINTER

MALAYSIANS FACE THE SAVAGE ENEMY

By DAVID BALHAM

Colonel Mohamed Hashim Hussein has no doubt about the main enemy facing the Malaysian Battalion, which deploys in Bosnia-Herzegovina this month.

It will not be aggression from any of the warring factions - it will be the cold.

Colonel Hashim, the commander of the battalion, says the savage conditions of the central European winter will be a real challenge for his men, who have never operated in such an environment. But they are not unprepared.

An advance detachment of 200 peacekeepers has spent almost two months in the Bihac pocket in western Bosnia, acclimatizing to the conditions.

Two of the battalion's doctors were sent to the mountains of Pakistan for high-altitude training, and have briefed the soldiers on how to survive in freezing conditions.

And the battalion will spend a month learning "winterization" techniques in Split before deploying.

Colonel Hashim is optimistic: "I guess like professional and trained soldiers everywhere we have to make the best out of any situation."

The mission's not Malaysia's first involvement in peace-keeping: Malaysian battalions have been sent to the former Congo (now Zaire), Namibia, Cambodia and Somalia.

But this mission has provoked unusual interest among the soldiers.

Although the Malaysian Army is professional, Colonel Hashim says most of the troops volunteered to come to the former Yugoslavia.

Those who were turned down for medical reasons were "extremely disappointed", he says.

The battalion consists of about 1500 soldiers, comprising two Mechanized Infantry Companies, two Cavalry Squadrons and an Engineer Squadron.

The engineers will be particularly important as work continues on the roads and bridges needed to bring aid to the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina this winter.

The Malaysians will be deployed in some of the most sensitive and challenging areas of central Bosnia-Herzegovina, including Jablanica - the site of the most important electricity generating station in the country - and Konjic.

Colonel Hashim says the sort of fighting encountered in the former Yugoslavia will be a new experience for his men, who up until late 1989 were involved in anti-guerrilla warfare against communist insurgents.

But he believes the lessons learnt in Malaysia could be extremely useful in helping to bring peace to Bosnia-Herzegovina.

"When you talk about insurgency it's a different ballgame altogether," he says.

"The magic words that we always used when we fought the insurgents were 'defence and development go hand in hand'. What it means is you can initiate a shooting war but there will be no end, there will be no light at the end of the tunnel.

"But if you talk about bringing development to the areas where you have been sent for operations I think you will win them over by a 'hearts and minds' campaign, and that's what we have done in the past."

Colonel Hashim says the Malaysians' personal characteristics will be invaluable to them in their work with other local people in the mission area. Again, the weather is a factor.

"It is always warm and sunny in Malaysia and we always exude warmth, friendliness and hospitality," he says. "I guess that's a part of the Malaysian culture and it's that kind of thing that we need to exude in this part of the world - to win friends and to establish harmony and close co-operation."

And he says he would like to send a message to the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina, with whom his battalion will soon be working.

"On behalf of the Malaysian people we would like to extend our very warm greetings to the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina. We share with you your problems, your difficulties and your various challenges. We hope you will be able to resolve the problems soon, so that we can all live together and make this world a better place."

BOOK REVIEW

MAN OF ACTION BELIEVES AND DARES

Croire et Oser
"Chronique de Sarajevo"
By Lt. Gen. Philippe Morillon
Grasset, Paris, 215 pages
Review by SHANNON BOYD

Among the first to arrive with UNPROFOR in the bleak, war-scarred winter of 1992 was Lieutenant-General Philippe Morillon. From his unique perspective, he has written a compelling account of the mission's struggle to protect a fragile and often faltering peace.

In clipped sentences, the rapid-fire style of Morillon's speech is mirrored in the text. His account of events is incisive. Vivid portraits of those he worked with and encountered punctuate his engaging story.

Morillon begins at the beginning, recalling the first days in Sarajevo with the Command team of Force Commander Lieutenant-General Nambiar, Civil Affairs Director Cedric Thornberry and Chief of Staff Brigadier-General Lewis MacKenzie.

The verve and complicity of that team was for Morillon one of the high points of his early mission days. "This 'equipe' functioned without a false note ... We gathered together almost instantly at any hour of the day or night whenever there was an important new development."

Despite his esteem for Nambiar and his excellent rapport with the team, Morillon, then Deputy Force Commander, was restless in his Headquarters job. A "man of action", he asked the Force Commander for a field assignment.

In June, Morillon left HQ to co-ordinate the UNPROFOR demilitarization of Sectors North and South. He was immediately absorbed with negotiations and operations supervizing withdrawal of the JNA from the UN Protected Areas.

With a pain still fresh, he recalls the morning of 18 July at Zemunik Airport where Captain Llinares and Lieutenant Capo disappeared before the eyes of their troops "in a storm of metal and fire", an explosion whose origins will never be known. Their loss cast a long shadow of sadness over the entire mission.

In July-August, UNPROFOR HQ moved from Belgrade to Zagreb and Nambiar recalled Morillon to his side. The DFC's energy was focused on the long and complex negotiations to defuse the volatile situation on the Prevlaka peninsula near Dubrovnik. Eventually, the parties agreed to a demilitarized zone monitored by UNPROFOR.

Meanwhile, Morillon kept a steady eye on

Lieutenant-General Morillon

developments in Bosnia.

In September, two soldiers from the French Logistics Battalion were killed in a surprise attack as they escorted a humanitarian convoy towards Sarajevo airport. Morillon recalls the shock waves this tragic incident sent through the rank and file of UNPROFOR.

In October, Morillon assumed his new duties as Commander of UNPROFOR's Bosnia-Herzegovina Command, now expanded well beyond airport operations to include humanitarian convoy support throughout the country.

Of his mission, Morillon recalls: "I have the advantage of not believing that the hatred between the communities is so great that reconciliation is impossible ... I believe peace is possible and that those responsible must be assisted in finding the terms. While awaiting this political solution, we must do everything possible to ease the suffering of the population."

The agonizing negotiations for cease-fires, the perilous missions to restore water and electricity to Sarajevo, the challenge of mounting the convoy operation are recalled in detail. Morillon pays tribute to the field officers, men and women, of UNPROFOR, UNHCR and the NGOs. "We forget that they pass entire nights on the road, in the snow and cold, in order to get the convoys through. In many of the most exposed areas they do the distribution themselves ... some of them losing their lives in the process. They give no sign of revolt or even discouragement. If I write this book today it is, above all, to pay them tribute, so well deserved."

In spring 1993, Morillon was preoccupied with the potentially disastrous humanitarian situation in the eastern enclaves of Srebrenica, Zepa and Gorazde. Cut off from all assistance, tens of thousands of civilians were threatened with disease and starvation. Horrified by reports of impending human disaster, Morillon decided to go himself to Srebrenica, an audacious exploit that remains one of the most dramatic pages in UNPROFOR's history. The day-by-day account of that memorable exploit makes for one of the book's most striking passages.

General Morillon, larger than life with his inimitable style, elegance and unique brilliance, left an indelible mark on UNPROFOR.

Those of us who worked with him will not soon forget the striking contrast between his vitality, sometimes bordering on brusqueness, and the depth of human warmth and perception which were uniquely Morillon.

"Croire et Oser", To Believe and To Dare, Morillon's motto and the title of his compelling book.

Lieutenant-General Morillon (centre) and Lieutenant-General Nambiar (on his left) at Sarajevo airport

AWARDS

Boutros Boutros-Ghali

ASTURIAS PEACE PRIZE AWARDED TO UNPROFOR

By MARC McEVOY

The 1993 International Co-operation Prize of the Prince of Asturias Foundation was formally awarded on 27 November to UNPROFOR in recognition of its peace-keeping and humanitarian efforts in the former Yugoslavia.

The UN Special Representative for Public Affairs, Ambassador Joseph Verner Reed, accepted the award in Oviedo, Spain, on behalf of the Secretary-General, Mr Boutros Boutros-Ghali.

After the award was announced on 21 May, Mr Boutros-Ghali wrote to the President of the Foundation, Mr Placido Arango: "The decision of the Prince of the Asturias Foundation to recognize UNPROFOR's efforts to provide humanitarian relief and end the bloodshed in the former Yugoslavia is most welcome. It will be a great encouragement to those brave men and women as they continue the difficult and dangerous tasks in which they are now engaged."

The International Co-operation Prize of the Prince of the Asturias Foundation is awarded annually to people or institutions that have been outstanding for their contribution to peace. Previous recipients have included the South African President, F.W. De Klerk, the African National Congress leader, Nelson Mandela, and the former UN Secretary-General, Javier Peres de Cuellar.

Eight representatives from UNPROFOR attended the award ceremony, including three members of Spanish Battalion and one member each from French Battalion 2, British Battalion, the UN Military Observers, the UN Civilian Police, and Administration.

NOBLE ACTIONS SAVE WOUNDED COLLEAGUE

By Captain AARO SUONIO

Captain Markku Viitanen, a Finnish UN Military Observer, had never been so scared in his life.

While patrolling the outskirts of Gorazde, a Muslim city in BH that had been surrounded by Serb forces for 14 months, his vehicle, which was carrying two other UNMOs, a local liaison officer and an interpreter, was suddenly blasted by a barrage of bullets.

"I started speeding for my life. To get out as quickly as possible on that poor dirt road was all I could think of at that moment," said Captain Viitanen, recalling the ordeal, which occurred on 19 June after the first UNMOs had entered Gorazde, declared a "safe area" under Security Council resolution 824.

"I don't know how long the liaison officer had been shouting that we were in the clear before I slowed down and noticed that Nils, a Norwegian, was hit. I also realised I had been driving with a tyre flattened by a bullet."

Lieutenant-Commander Nils Aune had indeed been hit. His flak jacket had stopped several bullets, which broke some ribs. But a bullet had gone through under his arm, pierced a lung, grazed his heart and entered the other lung. A second bullet had hit him in the arm. Amazingly, no one else in the car was wounded apart from scratches Captain Viitanen received from flying metal. One bullet had struck the door frame next to his head.

Determined to save his severely wounded colleague, Captain Viitanen - who had left Captain Aune at a field hospital to receive first aid - drove to an area known to be watched over by snipers so he could radio the other UNMOs in Gorazde for help.

An attempt was made from Gorazde to evacuate Captain Aune by armoured ambulance but the rescuers were fired at in the same location, only this time it was heavy machine-guns.

Captain Viitanen's team knew it would have to find another route back to the city centre. It meant again risking a drive through the same "sniper alley" that Captain Viitanen had passed to make radio contact. By now Captain Aune's condition was deteriorating rapidly. It had taken the team only 30 minutes to drive from Gorazde to the area where they came under fire. The drive back proved to be a nightmare.

"If it had not been for the support of my mates during the drive I might simply have given up," said Captain Viitanen, who now works at UNPROFOR's Zagreb headquarters.

After more than two hours, the team reached Gorazde city hospital, where Captain Aune underwent emergency surgery before being evacuated by a French APC-ambulance to an area north of the city, a drive he never would have survived without the surgery. From there he was flown by helicopter to Visoko Canadian hospital where he had a three-hour operation.

Captain Aune's survival was due largely to the heroic efforts of Captain Viitanen, who was awarded on 17 November the Norwegian Armed Forces Medal for Noble Actions by the Norwegian Commander in Chief, Admiral Rein. It was the first time the medal had been awarded to a foreigner.

Captain Aune (left) with Captain Viitanen at the award ceremony - Photo: AARO SUONIO

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

Nepbat officers brief HCA Cedric Thornberry (centre) near Masicki, Sector West, where he met local Croat and Serb leaders to discuss the presence of a Croat Special Police unit - Photo: ANDY BURRIDGE

From page 2

hospitals further up the road. In Sector North, the Turanj crossing reopened after more than two months (it had been closed after the Medak incursion in September).

On 17 November, another UNHCR driver was shot by soldiers at Kakanj after they had stopped his vehicle to ask for food. Throughout BH, bad weather made many of the convoy roads impassable, while others remained closed because of localized fighting. In The Hague, the inaugural session of the International Tribunal dealing with war crimes in the former Yugoslavia began.

On 18 November, the leaders of the warring parties in BH met in Geneva under UNHCR auspices and signed a declaration committing their forces to allowing the free passage of aid convoys and UNPROFOR vehicles and personnel.

On 19 November, Mr Stoltenberg endorsed UNHCR Mrs Ogata's recommendation that the convoys be resumed and the Secretary-General instructed that they recommence as soon as possible. BH was calm and relatively quiet for the most part. Sector South was tense and unstable, however, with over 600 artillery impacts reported in the area of Smilcic. Canbat succeeded in delivering 10 tonnes of coal, as well as a generator and spare parts, to alleviate the problems in the hospitals in Fojnica and Bakovici.

On 20 November, the Serb and Croat military commanders met under UNPROFOR auspices in Sector West and reached a "gentlemen's agreement" for a cease-fire while they considered a detailed written agreement put forward by Sector Commander Brigadier-General Shabsough.

On 21 November, the "gentlemen's agreement" for a cease-fire in Sector West came into effect. In central BH, the key convoy routes Triangle and Diamond remained closed, both because of HVO checkpoints prohibiting traffic and because of bad weather. In the Bihac pocket, UNHCR vehicles and drivers were detained by supporters of Mr Abdic.

Obstruction

On 22 November, an UNPROFOR supply convoy for Nordbat-2, which had been attempting for two weeks to pass Zvornik, was again held up at the border by the BSA local Commander. European Union Foreign Ministers meeting in Luxembourg decided to hold talks with the warring parties in BH to try to advance a Franco-German proposal that contemplated the suspension of sanctions against the FRY in return for territorial concessions by the Serbs to the Muslims in BH.

On 23 November, the first of the aid convoys to central BH left Split for Tomislavgrad, where it would rendezvous with a Britbat escort for the onward journey. The Nordbat-2 supply convoy (except for one truck) was allowed to cross the border and proceed. The Co-chairmen issued invitations to the Presidents of Montenegro, Serbia and Croatia to attend a meeting of the parties and the EU in Geneva planned for 29 November.

On 24 November, the first four of the resumed aid convoys to central BH reached their destinations in Zenica, Tuzla, Srebrenica and Zepa. In Sector North, a third face-to-face meeting between Serb and Croat commanders resulted in another "gentlemen's agreement" for a cease-fire, this time covering the Lika Corps area.

On 25 November, humanitarian convoy traffic into BH began to pick up, although the levels were still low and problems of access continued. More problems arose with obstruction of UN supply and logistics convoys at Zvornik. In Sector North, a further meeting between the Serb and Croat sides resulted in the extension by seven days of the cease-fire in the Banja area of operations.

On 27 November, eight representatives of UNPROFOR attended the award ceremony of the International Co-operation Prize of the Prince of Asturias Foundation in Oviedo, Spain, where the 1993 prize was presented to UNPROFOR in recognition of its humanitarian and peace-keeping efforts (see page 14).

On 29 November, two Canbat soldiers were killed, and a third injured, when their Cougar overturned on an icy road near Zenica. In Geneva, the parties to the conflict convened for talks with EU Foreign Ministers and the Co-chairmen. General Cot and General Briquemont witnessed an agreement between the military representatives of the parties allowing free passage of aid convoys and UN vehicles and personnel through BH.

On 30 November, UN convoys from Zvornik began moving freely, though attacks on UN personnel and vehicles in other areas continued. In Sector West, the Serb and Croat sides met for further talks aimed at reaching a written cease-fire agreement in the Sector.

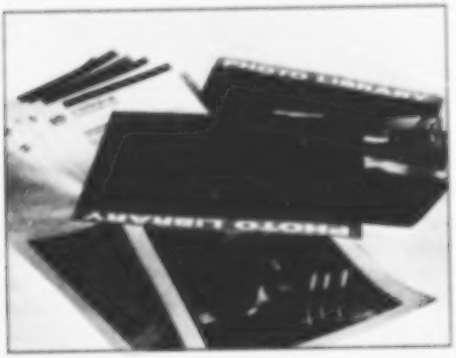
On 1 December, shells impacted close to the taxi-way at Sarajevo airport, raising the alert status to red and causing the temporary closure of the airport.

On 2 December, the Geneva talks adjourned in a constructive atmosphere, with the Co-chairmen planning to hold bilateral meetings with the parties in the near future. It was announced that Mr Stoltenberg would relinquish his responsibilities as SRSG to Mr Yasushi Akashi of Japan, and in future concentrate exclusively on his duties as Co-chairman of the Steering Committee of ICFY.

On 3 December, a Canbat soldier was wounded by a sniper's bullet in Srebrenica. In Sarajevo, two French soldiers were hit by snipers; one was badly wounded.

On 4 December, a Spabat Captain was killed and a sergeant seriously injured in a mine explosion at the Salakovac Dam.

PRESS & INFORMATION



Designs by Karen Kelleher

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